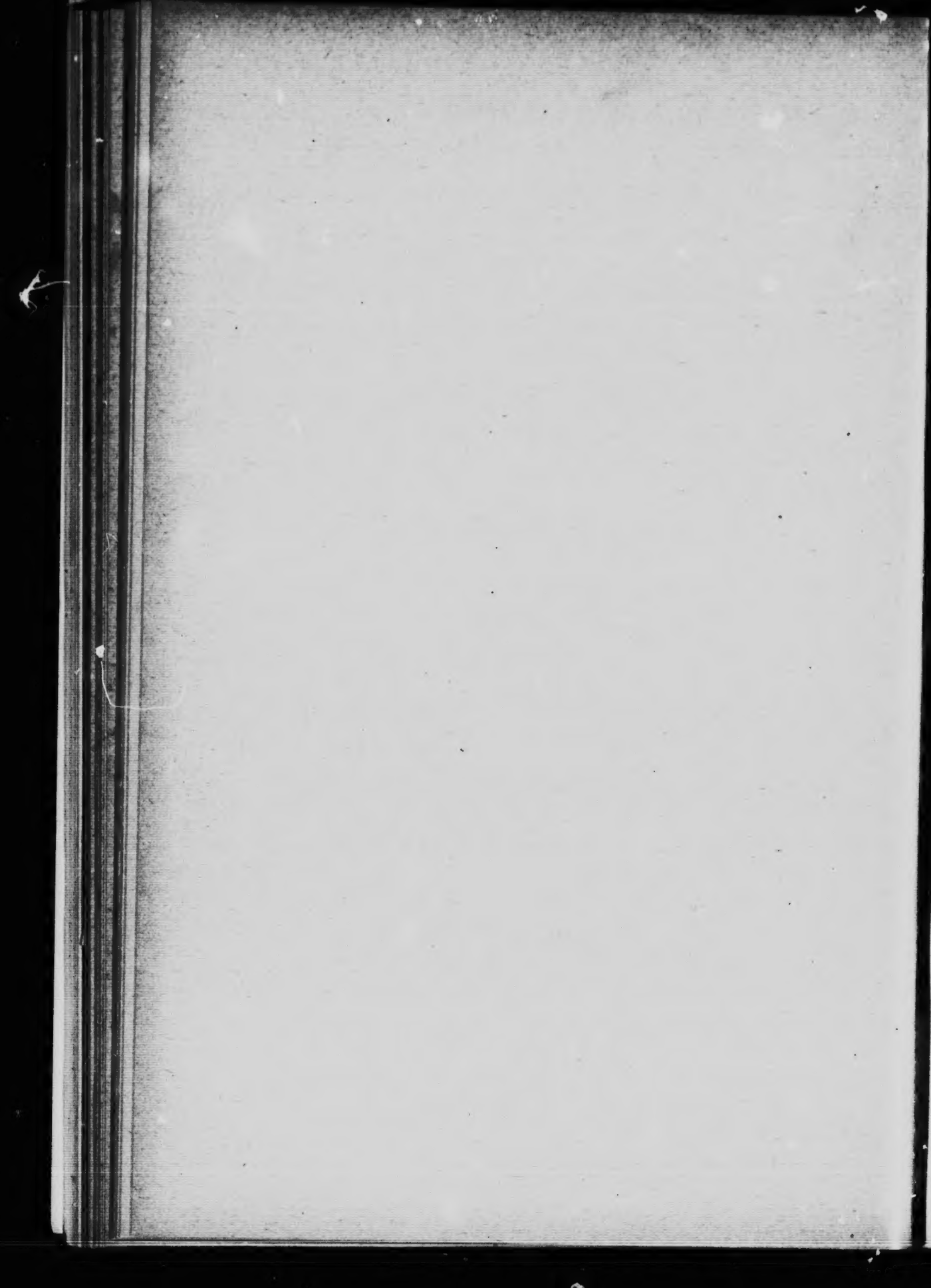




PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

(STATISTICS BRANCH.)

The Crop Situation in British Columbia, October 31st, 1917.

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CIRCULAR BULLETIN No. 17, dated October 18th, 1917, contained estimates of the area and yield of grains, fodders, and potatoes up to September 30th, also per cent. condition of potatoes, roots, corn, and alfalfa on the same date. The following statement shows revised estimates of yields and per cent. condition of certain crops and, in addition, average prices to the producers as on October 31st, 1917:—

(Yields subject to revision on receipt of Dominion estimates.)

Grain-crops.	Year.	Acres.	Estimated Average Yield.	Total Yield.
Fall wheat	1916	...	Bu.	Bu.
Fall wheat	1917	3,236	28.50	92,226
Spring wheat	1916	...	...	...
Spring wheat	1917	18,101	25.50	461,575
All wheat	1916	18,843	26.31	495,680
All wheat	1917	21,337	25.91	553,801
Oats	1916	67,065	55.98	3,753,994
Oats	1917	60,234	45.25	2,725,588
Barley	1916	4,006	36.13	144,744
Barley	1917	5,524	35.75	197,483
Rye	1916	452	22.74	10,279
Rye	1917	911	...	...
Peas	1916	1,085	29.87	32,411
Peas	1917	1,338	27.33	36,568
Mixed grains	1916	259	44.64	11,563
Mixed grains	1917	1,850	25.00	46,250
Buckwheat	1916	...	...	...
Buckwheat	1917	185	...	...
Corn for husking	1916	...	...	...
Corn for husking	1917	222	...	...
Other grains	1916	...	...	...
Other grains	1917	260	...	...

(Yields and prices subject to revision on receipt of Dominion estimates.)

Fodder-crops.	Year.	Acres.	Estimated Average Yield.	Total Yield.	Average Price.	Total Value.
			Tons.	Tons.		
Hay and clover	1916	122,419	1.90	234,265	\$16 56	\$3,880,200
Hay and clover	1917	129,254	2.14	276,971	18 00	4,985,476
Wild hay	1916	35,862	0.9	32,479	14 28	463,050
Wild hay	1917	...	...	...	...	...
Alfalfa	1916	5,591	2.64	14,785	16 14	238,064
Alfalfa	1917	8,081	2.98	25,871	17 50	452,742
Fodder-corn	1916	2,434	11.44	27,843	4 90	111,905
Fodder-corn	1917	2,239	...	...	...	...
Grain-hay	1916	22,424	2.22	49,782	14 02	742,627
Grain-hay	1917	18,800	...	...	...	...
Green forage	1916	213	28.8	6,144	4 19	25,747
Green forage	1917	1,810	...	...	...	...
<i>Other Crops.</i>						
Potatoes	1916	12,067*	6.03	72,709	25 37	1,844,612
Potatoes	1917	15,264	5.60	85,916	23 12	1,986,378
Turnips	1916	...	...	...	...	...
Turnips	1917	2,903	16.75	33,550	15 00	503,250
Mangels	1916	...	...	...	...	...
Mangels	1917	1,016	17.27	17,546	8 00	140,368
Sugar-beets	1916	...	...	...	...	...
Sugar-beets	1917	401	13.37	5,361	8 00	42,888
Roots, n.o.p.	1916	2,903	16.65	48,333	12 05	585,505
Beans	1916	1,809	25.82	46,711	3 90	182,173
Beans	1917	2,187†	15.00	32,805	6 75	221,434

* Commercial area only.

† Corrected acreage.

The following statement shows per cent. condition of quality of various crops on October 31st, 1917:—

(The full standard being 100.)

Crop.	Islands.	Lower Main-land.	Thompson Watershed.	Central and Northern.	o.n.	Boundary.	Kootenay.	Average, 1917.	Average, 1916.
Potatoes	77	87	75	79	...	90	70	78	84
Turnips	84	85	88	72	...	...	70	80	...
Mangels	83	70	82	76	75	...	80	78	...
Carrots	92	...	92	76	82	...	62	81	...
Beets	88	...	80	60	90	...	...	79	...
Sugar-beets ..	75	...	75	90	65	...	60	73	...
Hay and clover	96	94	82	74	95	90	92	89	87
Wild hay	100	80	78	80	...	85	50	79	...
Alfalfa	95	...	86	45	100	95	100	87	94
Fodder-corn ...	94	85	89	...	...	95	...	91	86
Fall wheat ...	92	...	70	100	55	98	98	85	86

Average quality of turnips and other roots, 1916, 89 per cent. The area sown to fall wheat for 1918 is estimated to be 3,285 acres, as against 3,236 acres in 1916, or 1.5 per cent. increase.

SUMMARY.

GRAINS.

Notwithstanding the slight increase in the total area of grains in 1917 over 1916, the total yield shows a decrease due to unfavourable climatic conditions. The decrease in oats, the chief grain crop, was 19.2 per cent.

FODDERS.

Hay and clover yields were good, being 12.6 per cent. greater than 1916. Alfalfa, while promising well at first cutting, was later affected by drought, yet the average of all cuttings was 12.9 per cent. greater than 1916.

VEGETABLES.

Field Roots, according to the 1917 returns, show an increase in area of 58.1 per cent. over the previous year. These crops, however, got a poor start in the spring and drought retarded growth, so that unless exceptional growth is made during the later months the average yield will not be up to standard.

Beans, while comprising a comparatively small percentage of the total area of crops, are nevertheless an important crop owing to the high price obtaining in 1917, this being about \$6.75 per bushel, as against \$3.90 in 1916. The acreage is estimated to be 20.9 per cent. greater than 1916, and the average yield provisionally estimated to be 41.9 per cent. less.

Potatoes.—This crop, owing to its importance as a staple food, is worthy of particular mention at this time. Any previous figures published have dealt with commercial quantities only, but during the past two years the production of small city and other garden plots has become an important factor in the total supply of the Province, and must be considered accordingly.

A careful investigation has been made, and results are given in the following statement showing supply, distribution, and surplus on July 1st, 1918.

It must be noted that the figures relating to exports are to November 10th only, so that the actual net surplus depends largely on subsequent exports up to July 1st, 1918. Another important bearing on this surplus is the percentage of the total supply which will be carried over the coming winter. The larger this quantity, the greater will be the total tonnage lost through shrinkage.

It is also well to bear in mind that, owing to the high price of the 1916 stock of potatoes in the spring of 1917, the consumption of this year's crop started much earlier than average; but, as it is difficult to arrive at any quantity, this point is not considered in the following statement:—

	Tons.	Tons.
Total supply, including commercial and small plots and all grades	...	94,417
Total commercial grades (85.35 per cent.)	80,581	
Total small grades (14.65 per cent.)	13,836	
Total all grades	94,417	
1. Human consumption @ 4.46 bu. per capita per annum	47,358	
2. Animal consumption	7,700	
Total human and animal	55,058	
3. Seed requirements, 1918, for 15,002 acres @ 800 lb. per acre	6,037	
4. Exports (total shipped out of Province as raw) to November 10th, 1917	4,000	
5. Evaporators	15,000	
6. Shrinkage on 61,253 tons (or storage quantity) @ the rate of 15 per cent.	9,188	
Total distribution	89,283	
Estimated surplus July 1st, 1918	5,134	

FRUIT.

The present year's fruit-crop of the Province has probably been the most satisfactory in the history of the industry, for not only are the yields of tree-fruits provisionally estimated to be equal to 1916, but prices to growers as well reached a new

high-water mark. The quality aside from being a little undersized, was excellent, being highly coloured and free from blemishes, the latter condition being due to the comparative freedom of orchards from insect pests and diseases.

Stone-fruits were in good demand at high prices.

Notwithstanding some apprehension among growers as to the effect of the overseas embargo, the entire crop was disposed of earlier than average.

Viewing the crop situation as a whole, while the late, wet spring and subsequent drought held down yields of grains and vegetables, yet prices realized by the growers have been high enough to well offset decreased production, so that the total value will undoubtedly be greater than 1916. The cost of farm operation has, however, been very high. Labour has not only been very scarce during harvest periods, but wages demanded by all classes were high. The cost of both human and animal food commodities, where it was necessary to procure these off the farm, has greatly increased, so that, notwithstanding high prices secured for farm products, the cost of operation has limited the margin of profit.

LIVE STOCK.

This industry generally may be described as satisfactory. The demand for horses has been brisk at good prices, while breeding of this stock has been satisfactory.

Beef cattle were maturing well during the earlier part of the year, but subsequent drought dried pastures, making it difficult to maintain this condition.

Sheep have given satisfactory returns, prices of the meat and wool being good.

There has been a marked increase in the hog industry in 1917, and pork prices have been good.

The poultry industry continues to feel the burden of high prices of feed, resulting in about 10 per cent. of the laying stock being sold off and a corresponding decrease in egg production. The number of young birds has been fairly well maintained, however.

Prices of poultry have not been as good as they might have been had better marketing distribution been possible.

Dairying remains about as last year. Drought caused from 5 to 10 per cent. reduction in butter manufactured. In some sections high feed prices are causing herds to change hands. The price of butter-fat has, however, been such as to offset any decrease in quantity.

Department of Agriculture,

Statistics Branch, November 12th, 1917.

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